Waterfowl Hunting Conditions on Monte Vista/Alamosa National Wildlife Refuges

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The San Luis Valley of south central Colorado is still experiencing severe drought conditions, which has adversely affected waterfowl populations on Monte Vista and Alamosa National Wildlife Refuges. During these drought periods, inadequate habitat cannot meet the life cycle needs of waterfowl and other waterbirds. It affects, food availability, their ability to breed and raise young, and the amount of time waterfowl spend in the San Luis Valley.

Although the Monte Vista National Wildlife Refuge boasts of some of the highest duck nesting densities in the country. The recent drought has resulted in the lowest duck production ever recorded there. In addition, important migration habitat on both refuges has been greatly diminished. These conditions directly affect waterfowl hunting on the Refuges. Areas traditionally wet, which supported many birds, are now dry and support none. Approximately half of traditional hunting areas on both Refuges are dry this year.

Alamosa National Wildlife Refuge:
In 2002, hunting was closed on Alamosa NWR, due to lack of adequate habitat. For 2003, the water situation on Alamosa is much better and waterfowl hunting will be allowed. However, adequate water will likely only occur near parking areas 3, 4 and 5.

Monte Vista National Wildlife Refuge:
The drought has affected the Monte Vista NWR more severely this year than in 2002. Refuge lands east of county road 3 East (Parker Pond) are dry. Waterfowl hunting will be best accessed through parking areas 1,2 5.

During the first two weekends of the first waterfowl season split (October 4, 5, 11, and 12) hunting is allowed by permit only. All refuge specific regulations still apply, contact the Refuge-(719)589-4021 for further details about water conditions and refuge specific hunting regulations.